

## **2002 Annual Executive Summary**

### **Lake County Enterprise Community**

The experiment that is the Lake County Enterprise Community is working. A walk down the street, a ride through town, a conversation with residents will tell you the same thing. Last year the role of the EC began changing from that of developing direct grants and awards to more indirect benefits, where grants and loans were achieved because of the EC designation, or through partnering with the EC. The emphasis has been on continuing to forge a network, making connections and fostering cooperation, a can-do attitude and holding onto the vision. It has been a powerful and empowering year. Tourism and housing dominate the EC agenda in 2002. The first Idlewild Jazz Festival brought over two thousand (2,000) visitors to the Lake County area. Planning for the second music festival is underway. The economic impact of this event is significant. The new Variety Store financed by the FiveCAP Intermediary Relending Program has tripled floor space and is stocking for the need of area residents and visitors. The U.S. Forestry Service received a special Historic Preservation Grant and are working on a CCC Camp replica to recognize the black men who were in the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC), many of whom remained to live in Lake County. Two (2) books have been published about Idlewild and Lake County as tourism areas, one, "The Idlewild Community: Black Eden" by Dr.'s Lewis Walker and Ben C. Wilson, the other, "Images of America; Idlewild: The Black Eden of Michigan" by Dr. Ronald J. Stephens. Over thirty (30) single family housing sites were acquired, in addition to six (6) new homes which were built last year. Construction is starting on the Multi Family Housing Project. Infrastructure improvements that are associated with this project include roads and sanitary sewer.